

Students exploring Toronto's past and future

For an increasing number of George Brown students the Don Valley won't be just a highway but the place they'll go to learn skills and help build a sustainable future for Toronto. Nestled into the country-like folds of the valley near Pottery Road, the students will be engaged in a variety of projects including restoring century old buildings, monitoring the efficiency of new construction techniques and showing off student-designed homes.

The projects – which may also include the design and construction of a greenhouse – are part of a growing year-old partnership between the college and Evergreen Brick Works, a non-profit organization that is a managing the development of a huge swath of land in the valley centered on the Victorian industrial buildings where bricks were produced for almost a century.

While George Brown Building Restoration students will help preserve these relics from the past, other students are also engaged in helping Evergreen plot a path to an urban future that uses new environmentally-friendly technologies. A George Brown/Evergreen project to test new energy-efficient house cladding was recently awarded a five-year \$1 million research grant from the Ministry of Research and Innovation – the first time a college had been given a grant of this type. Students at the Brick Works, led by Professor Christopher Timusk, will monitor the effectiveness of the cladding and investigate other sustainable building construction and restoration materials and techniques.

Ironically, if successful, the project will discover a way to clad the typically poorly-insulated Toronto house that is made of brick. "Our houses were made at a time when energy was cheap," says Andrew Fraser, who is managing the partnership with Evergreen as George Brown's Manager of Industry Liaison & Technology Transfer in the Applied & Institutional Research Department. Cities are responsible for 75 per cent of all the energy we use and the greenhouse gases we emit, with buildings accounting for nearly 40 per cent of that, he says.

In addition to exploring retrofitting existing housing, George Brown students will be at the Brick Works with designs for new home that more effectively use materials and energy. Students in the Institute without Boundaries program are preparing



George Brown Building Restoration student Ryan Hunkin cuts a concrete block at the Evergreen Brick Works in the Don Valley near Pottery Road. As part of a growing partnership with the non-profit organization, George Brown students spent two days a week at the site – first practicing masonry techniques and then helping to restore the century-old industrial buildings there. George Brown and Evergreen were also recently awarded a five-year \$1 million research grant to study energy-efficient building systems at the site.

to display their World House project there, including the cigar-shaped Canohome.

There are other possibilities in the works that will increase the number of students and teachers who spend time in the Don Valley in coming years. For example, Professor Stephanie Adams is holding a design meeting this spring to consider the design for a greenhouse that could be built – perhaps by George Brown students – on the Brickworks site. "We are looking towards this as a long-term strategic partnership," says Fraser.

The Brick Works site, which consists of sixteen heritage buildings and a 16-hectare public park that includes the Weston Quarry Garden, wetlands, hiking trails, and wildflower meadows, was acquired for public use in the late 1980s after operating as a brick

works from 1889 to 1984. It's owned by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, and managed by the City of Toronto. Evergreen will use the grounds to feature programs that include a farmers' market, workshops, festivals, a local food cafe and a native plant nursery. Other programs will help non-profit organizations and socially conscious private enterprises address key environmental issues by providing innovative learning opportunities and office space.

"Evergreen Brick Works is a community environmental centre that inspires and equips visitors to live, work and play more sustainably," the organization says on its website. "Evergreen, a national charity, has transformed the former Don Valley Brick Works from a collection of deteriorating heritage buildings into an international showcase for urban sustainability and green design."

New campus design process models an interprofessional approach

George Brown is bringing some of the same principles of interprofessionalism it teaches to the interior design of its new waterfront campus.

Literally hundreds of employees are involved in providing input to architects who are designing the teaching and working spaces in the new building, currently under construction south of Queen's Quay East near the foot of Sherbourne Street. More important than the unprecedented numbers involved, the effort is bringing together employees from different departments and staff groups to share their expertise and views. For some it's the first time they have worked in teams with colleagues from other programs and areas.

Lorie Shekter-Wolfson, who as Assistant Vice-President of Waterfront Development and Community Services and Health Sciences Dean is leading the campus development, says the interdisciplinary approach of the design process reinforces the academic direction of the centre.

"Our approach to healthcare education is where two or more professional programs learn from, with and about each other," she says. "It makes perfect sense that we model this collaborative approach in designing what will be one of the first purpose-built interprofessional health sciences learning centres in the world."

Teams of employees are looking at most aspects of the building – from the technology requirements of the college's first completely wireless internet environment to particular space design needs and collaborative public spaces. "The beauty of it all is



Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty (left) gets a first-hand look at the progress being made on George Brown's new waterfront campus in late April with George Brown President Anne Sado (right). McGuinty and Sado walked half way around the perimeter of the lakefront building, south of Queen's Quay East near the foot of Sherbourne St. Workers have finished constructing below ground retaining walls and are now excavating soil and rock from the site. Once that is done, foundations will be created and construction of the building proper will begin.

that they're really are consulting," says Nursing Professor Sandy Wiesenthal, who sits on an employee committee that is currently looking at the design of faculty office space with colleagues from other nursing programs as well as dental programs, General Education and Continuing Education.

Wiesenthal acts a conduit for information from her campus planning group back to other professors in her program and, in turn, passes information forward from her colleagues. "People are engaged.

They care about it," she says. "We've had some lively discussion around our faculty table."

Shekter-Wolfson says the process of involving virtually all corporate and academic employees in designing the building where the physical space will enable interprofessional learning was a deliberate step in breaking down the boundaries between programs, professions and staff groups. "The process is a metaphor for what we're trying to achieve in the new building," she says. "The process of engaging faculty has set the stage for curriculum development."

Acting Health Sciences Dean Cory Ross says most students in the centre are already exposed to the concept of interprofessionalism, while a smaller number are immersed in it or have it integrated in their learning at George Brown.

Those percentages will rise significantly in coming years in the new building because the space will unite currently disparate programs and facilitate informal interprofessionalism. "Most collaborative work takes place outside the classroom," he says.

The new building will probably incorporate flexible room and furniture arrangements as well as harnessing technology – such as in-house video conferencing between rooms – to allow for more flexible and innovative teaching and learning. Ross says.

Consultation is also going with groups outside George Brown. "I've taken this outside by consulting with health care leaders in Ontario, for instance at St. Michael's Hospital, to ensure alignment," says Shekter-Wolfson. "We see this space as an interprofessional lead in the province."

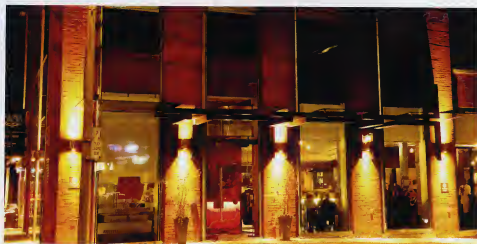


SUNNY DAY IN THE PARK: Graphic Design student Carri Han's picture of the crowds enjoying the cherry blossoms in Toronto's High Park on a warm spring day is included in a George Brown photography exhibition that celebrates the diversity of Toronto. Called *DiverCity*, the exhibition, part of the city-wide Contact multi-site photography show, explores the diversity and culture of our city interpreted through images by Toronto photographer Andre Fortier and George Brown students. The exhibition runs from May 6 to 31 in the Graphic Design Building at 230 Richmond St. E.

Water and wind power reduces college's environmental impact



George Brown is harnessing the non-polluting sources of energy, such as these wind turbines near the shore of Lake Huron in Ravenswood, Ontario, (left) to supply electricity for its building at 215 King St. E, which houses classrooms and the The Chefs' House, George Brown's training restaurant (right).



George Brown is buying electricity generated by water and wind mills to reduce its impact on the environment. It's arranged to have energy from exclusively non-polluting, renewable sources power the lights, office and kitchen equipment in 215 King St. E., home of The Chefs' House, the college's student training restaurant.

The decision, part of the college's Green Plan, will reduce the carbon footprint of the college.

The power won't come directly from the mills located across Ontario but George Brown's investment of \$12,000 will allow a green energy retailer – Bullfrog Power Inc. – to add the equivalent of the building's annual electricity use to Ontario's power grid. The green power costs about 30 per cent more than normal power, which is generated mostly by oil, natural gas and nuclear plants in Ontario. About 80 per cent of the electricity Bullfrog buys is from water mills and 20 per cent from wind turbines. About a quarter of the energy supplied by Ontario Power Generation, which supplies most of the province's electricity, is generated from renewable sources.

"As part of our Green Plan, George Brown College is reducing our carbon footprint by increasing energy efficiency in our buildings", says President Anne Sado. "Choosing Bullfrog Power is one of many ways to reduce the College's environmental impacts, while setting a green stewardship example for our students."

The move to clean power is popular among employees who use the four-story building – which is part of the St. James Campus. "I'm 359 per cent in favour of it," says teacher Paul Comeau, who holds communications classes at 215 King. "My personal dream would be to have a house that has zero environmental impact."

While the stoves in The Chefs' House are natural gas, electricity powers a wide range of kitchen equipment there including freezers, fridges, mixers, espresso

makers, as well as the restaurant's order taking and billing system, says manager Heather Dyer. "It's nice to know it's Bullfrog power," she says.

Bullfrog's electricity generators will add clean, renewable electricity onto the regional grid to match the amount of power the building will use. In Ontario, Bullfrog Power's electricity comes exclusively from local wind and hydro facilities that have been certified as low impact by Environment Canada under its EcoLogoM program. Demand by Bullfrog Power has prompted the construction of new wind turbines, the company says.

George Brown's Green Plan includes goals to reduce the college's eco-footprint through a range of greening initiatives in facilities, waste management, food services, housekeeping and green purchasing.

"We congratulate George Brown College for taking action on the environment through its Green Plan, and are pleased to welcome the organization to the Bullfrog-powered community here in Ontario," said Tom Heintzman, President, Bullfrog Power. "Continually renowned for its chefs, the college is also becoming well known and respected for its environmental leadership."



LEARNING TO SIGN IT: George Brown Library Learning Commons and Assessment Centre employees show off their newly acquired skill American Sign Language (ASL) skills after a two-day professional development course led by professor Nancy Travis Blanchard assisted by George Brown ASL Literacy Instructor students. The course was designed to equip the employees with key words and phrases – "What is your student ID number?" for example – so they can more effectively communicate with Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students and employees. The course helped the students gain practice teaching ASL as well as helping the college increase the accessibility of its services and comply with provincial disability legislation.

President Anne Sado



At George Brown College we often say that we are here to support our students in the pursuit of their dreams, which means more than just finding a job after graduation. Indeed, the most inspiring student success stories are those in which a college program has been not only career changing, but also life changing. For students of the Second Career program here at George Brown, the idea of pursuing life goals carries a particularly significant and urgent dimension.

Introduced in response to the loss of jobs in sectors facing economic uncertainty, the provincial government's Second Career program was designed to support laid-off and unemployed workers in training for new careers in high-demand fields. Originally intended to offer retraining for 20,000 people over a three year period, the program has helped almost 21,000 people since May of 2008. The much higher than anticipated demand has created some challenges, especially

for applicants, which led to new program guidelines last November.

Despite the process issues, results thus far for Second Career students speak to the program's value and successful implementation at George Brown. Since the very first intake in September, 2008, the number of Second Career students has risen from 12 in our first intake, to 558 as of this past January. On average, the GPA scores of Second Career students are more than half a point higher than those of all students, a strong indication of this group's high motivation. Students in the Second Career program are also present in a full range of programs across all our divisions at George Brown, with over a third choosing programs in Community Services and Early Childhood and roughly a quarter in Construction and Engineering Technologies.

One particular graduate's story illustrates the program's potential impact on people's lives. Having arrived in the Second Career program after being laid off at the same time as her husband, Cathy Cope, a mother of three and a former secretary, discovered her desire to counsel others and enrolled in the Career and Work Counsellor program. After graduating at the top of her class with a 3.92 GPA, she went on to find short term employment with an employment centre and is now confident about her future career prospects. In addition to this, she continues to give back to the college by participating in Second Career workshops and assisting other prospective students.

In addition to such promising student results, George Brown's successful implementation of Second Career has also demonstrated the college's unique strengths and capabilities. The Community Partnerships office, with the involvement of divisions and departments across the college, has been able to align internal resources to help smooth the transition for Second Career students. From ensuring information is shared with appropriate divisions to registration, counseling and career services in support of transition and retention, the Second Career program is an important example of George Brown's ability to play a key role in the province's labour market.

Beyond the success of our implementation of Second Career, the ultimate test of the program's value will be the number of its graduates who find new employment. Now that the number of students enrolled in the program is much more significant, we will be looking to begin tracking and measuring results as they graduate.

As significant shifts continue to take place in our economy, Second Career and other flexible education models will become increasingly important. George Brown College has been proud to support this program and the people it supports. Thanks to all staff for your support and for the positive impact from your efforts.

GREEN SPOT

Phantom power may be boosting your electricity bill by 15%, according to the Ontario Power Authority (OPA).

Phantom power is the electricity that keeps things like TVs, computers and game consoles on standby for instant use 24 hours a day. Plugging these energy wasters into an easy on/off power bar is just one of the energy-saving suggestions on OPA's PowerPledge website <http://www.powerpledge.ca/pledge/>
Plus by pledging to save energy you can get a bonus 20 Air Miles!



Make it happen.

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